

## Biffa Municipal press release

26<sup>th</sup> August 2011

### IFFA TO ROLL OUT NEW KERBSIDE RECYCLING SCHEME IN LEICESTER

Leicester City Council has made the decision to roll out a new kerbside recycling scheme across the city in October after a successful trial by recycling and waste management contractor Biffa. The six-month trial increased recycling by almost 11 per cent a week, and enabled participating households to recycle around half of their waste.

Launched last September, the new scheme trial saw bags replacing recycling boxes in selected areas of Leicester. The orange bags enabled residents to collect a wider range of recyclables including mixed plastics, metal containers and cardboard.

Participating residents could put out as many orange bags as they liked to maximise diversion of eligible recyclables. Biffa's crews collected the recycling bags weekly on the same day as residual waste wheelie bins were emptied, making the scheme simple and easy for residents.

#### **Recycling up 129%, waste down 15%**

In-depth monitoring found that the weight of recyclables collected each week more than doubled to an average of 18.8 tonnes per week. At the same time, the amount of wheelie bin residual waste collected in the trial areas decreased by 15.3 per cent, falling from an average of 98 tonnes per week to 83.

The study also revealed that previously non-recycling households started to use the orange bags during the trial, and that participation rates in the trial areas jumped from an average of 63 per cent to 83 per cent.

The trial was described by Biffa general manager Simon Crook as 'an outstanding example' of how significant recycling improvements can be made with some 'simple tweaks'.

He explained: "What every local authority wants is to get the maximum amount of recyclables, whether dry or organic, out of the waste stream that goes to expensive landfill.

"Leicester's trial showed that by commingling a wider range of dry recyclables, you provide a simpler and easier way for residents to recycle more. The city-wide expansion of the scheme should make a notable difference, and the Biffa team is poised to play its part with enthusiasm and commitment."

#### **Part of PFI contract**

The trial was designed and implemented by Biffa as part of its 25-year PFI contract with Leicester City Council. The £300 million contract, which began in 2003, involves Biffa making around 220,000 weekly collections of municipal recyclables and waste, as well as 36,000 bulk collections annually, emptying 300 recycling bring banks each week, and managing the city's two community recycling centres.

Paralleling Biffa's collection duties is the processing of Leicester's recyclables and waste. Dry recyclables collected from the kerbside will be sent to Biffa's MRF in Aldridge, while wheelie bin refuse is sent to Biffa's plant at Bursom.

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This uses a unique ball mill to divert up to 70% of this refuse from landfill. Advanced technologies help extract materials such as paper, cardboard, plastics, cans and organic matter.

Organic materials, such as food and garden waste, are then sent to Biffa's anaerobic digestion facility at Wanlip where they are turned into soil conditioners, as well as helping produce electricity that is fed back into the National Grid.

Councillor Sarah Russell, assistant city mayor at Leicester City Council, said: "The results of the trial show that a city-wide scheme should bring real benefits. It could increase the city's overall recycling and composting rate from 40 per cent to closer to 50 per cent.

"The new scheme has been really popular with residents who clearly want to recycle more of their household waste without any additional fuss. It's the simplicity of the new scheme that's helped it prove to be so successful."

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### Notes to editors:

The municipal division of recycling, waste and renewable energy business Biffa ([www.biffa.co.uk](http://www.biffa.co.uk)) currently provides high quality, efficient recycling, refuse, street cleansing and grounds maintenance services for over 40 local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland. The division expanded considerably in late 2010 when municipal services specialist Verdant Group, and its 24 local authority contracts, joined Biffa when Greenstar UK was acquired. The municipal business makes over 2½ million collections per week, and employs in excess of 2,500 staff who use over 1,000 vehicles. Its notable successes include helping South Oxfordshire District Council achieve a recycling and composting rate of 70% during 2010, placing the council second in Defra's 2009-2010 league tables for overall recycling, composting and reuse and winning a LARAC Award for the most improved recycling authority. The first months of Vale of White Horse District Council's new service saw its recycling and composting rate match that of its South Oxfordshire neighbour, while a redesigned service for Surrey Heath Borough Council doubled its recycling and composting rate to almost 65%, helping it meet its 2025 target almost 15 years early.

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The Biffa logo consists of the word "Biffa" in a white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a solid red square.

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